News Release
Communiqué

Ontario

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Ministère de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée

For Immediate Release
June 1, 2007
2007/nr-137

MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT DELIVERING IMPROVED CANCER CARE SERVICES FOR OTTAWA AREA RESIDENTS

Cancer Hub Speeding Up Access To Care

OTTAWA –The Champlain Regional Cancer Diagnostic Assessment Centre is improving access to cancer services in the Ottawa area through a coordinated and streamlined approach to the delivery of care as part of a $3.5 million McGuinty government Wait Time Strategy investment.

"We are strengthening our health care system through innovative approaches and improved access to cancer services," said Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman. "By centralizing diagnostic assessment for cancer, Ottawa regional hospitals are helping patients receive timely quality health care." The Champlain Regional Cancer Diagnostic Assessment Centre is a hub for cancer assessments, support, guidance, education and multi-disciplinary services. The Centre provides services to approximately 40 patients a week and has seen 204 new patients accounting for 387 visits since January 2007.

The hub works with eight hospitals in the Ottawa region and guides patients along each step of their journey through the cancer treatment process. The Centre shares information and resources between hospitals and providers and refers patients to the surgeon(s) with the shortest wait time in the Champlain Local Health Integration Network (LHIN).

"Today's announcement highlights the positive results that come when different health care teams and our Government work together to benefit those in need," said Jim Watson, MPP for Ottawa West-Nepean and Minister of Health Promotion. "Centralized assessment will mean shorter waiting to access care and even more efficient use of the resources that we have been growing since 2003"

"Wait times for cancer surgery have declined by nearly 30 per cent in the past eighteen months and this assessment centre will lead to even lower wait times in the future," said Dr. Robert Cushman, Champlain LHIN CEO. "We are excited to lead innovative health care in Ontario and support better delivery of services."

All cancer diagnostic tests are booked in a one-stop visit by a multi-disciplinary staff team at the centre. The thoracic oncology program began in January 2007. The colon and prostate cancer programs will follow in July and September 2007.

"This Cancer Diagnostic Assessment Centre is an example of how working together, we can create quality health care that delivers results," said Dr. Hartley Stern, Vice President, Regional Cancer Program, The Ottawa Hospital. "We are proud to partner with other hospitals in the Champlain LHIN to improve our health care system and to ensure patients receive cancer care when they need it."

As a result of the government's Wait Time Strategy, wait times in which nine out of 10 patients have completed their surgery or have had their exam in the Champlain LHIN area have decreased significantly since August/September 2005 by:

- 29.5 per cent for cancer surgery (33 days)
- 86.4 per cent for angioplasty (48 days)
- 68.4 per cent for angiography (57 days)
- 54.0 per cent for MRI scans (175 days)
- 23.0 per cent for cataract surgery (79 days)
- 15.9 per cent for hip replacement (60 days)
- 11.0 per cent for CT scans (nine days)

"This is the first fully developed diagnostic assessment centre and surgical program in Ontario on a complete regional scale," says Terry Sullivan, PhD, President and CEO, Cancer Care Ontario. "Earlier and better diagnosis can affect a patient's chance of surviving cancer or being cured of their disease."

Today's initiative is part of the McGuinty government's plan for innovation in public health care, building a system that delivers on three priorities – keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait times and providing better access to doctors and nurses.

-30-

Media Contacts:

David Spencer
Minister's Office
416-327-4320

David Jensen
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
416-314-6197

Members of the general public: 1-866-532-3161

This news release, along with other media materials, such as matte stories and audio clips, on other subjects, are available on our website at: http://www.health.gov.on.ca under the News Media section.

For more information on achievements in health care, visit: www.resultsontario.gov.on.ca.

Disponible en français.